

Using the AT Checklist

In some cases team members are not fully aware of all the assistive technology that might be available to assist with the task that is of concern. In that case there are several tools and resources that can be used to assist them. One of those tools is the AT Checklist. The AT Checklist is a concise listing of assistive technology arranged by the task for which it would be utilized. Categories are: Seating, Positioning and Mobility; Communication; Computer Access; Motor Aspects of Writing, Composition of Written Material; Reading; Mathematics; Organization; Recreation & Leisure; Activities of Daily Living; Vision; Hearing; and Multiple Challenges.

Within each of these categories suggested assistive technology is arranged in a hierarchy from the simplest, low-tech alternatives to more complex or high-tech items. They are arranged this way because the developers shared a belief that we want to select the simplest alternative that successfully assists the student. Many years ago we had a number of experiences where service providers immediately jumped to the most complex solution without first trying other alternatives. The hierarchical arrangement of the items in the AT Checklist is in response to this type of thinking. For example, just because a student has difficulty with writing, does not mean that the first thing we try would be voice recognition. While voice recognition is exciting and very appealing, there are other, simpler tools that should be tried first to see if they work.

You will note that each section also includes a space to write in new assistive technology. Since many new products are introduced each year, it is important to be able to add new items. The final section of the AT Checklist is a place to write comments that the team has as they utilize the Checklist. These may include something that has been tried or a plan to try a sequence of items. It is always important to capture in writing the discussions that take place as team members work together to arrive at an assistive technology decision.

WATI Assistive Technology Assessment Checklist

SEATING, POSITIONING AND MOBILITY

Seating and Positioning

- ☐ Standard seat/workstation at correct height and depth
- ☐ Modifications to standard seat or desk
- ☐ Alternative chairs
- ☐ Adapted/alternate chair, sidelyer, stander
- ☐ Custom fitted wheelchair or insert

Mobility

- ☐ Walking devices - crutches/walker
- ☐ Grab bars and rails
- ☐ Manual wheelchair
- ☐ Powered scooter, toy car or cart
- ☐ Powered wheelchair w/joystick or other control
- ☐ Adapted vehicle for driving

COMMUNICATION

- ☐ Concrete Representation
- ☐ Simple speech generating device
- ☐ Speech generating device with levels
- ☐ Speech generating device with icon sequencing
- ☐ Speech generating device with dynamic display
- ☐ Text based device with speech synthesis

COMPUTER ACCESS

- ☐ Positioning of student
- ☐ Standard Keyboard/Mouse with accessibility/access features built into the operating system
- ☐ Standard Keyboard/Mouse with Adaptations
- ☐ Rate Enhancement
- ☐ Alternate Keyboard/Mouse
- ☐ Onscreen keyboard
- ☐ Voice recognition software
- ☐ Eye Gaze
- ☐ Morse Code
- ☐ Switch Access
- ☐ Other: _____

MOTOR ASPECTS OF WRITING

- ☐ Environmental and seating adaptations
- ☐ Variety of pens/pencils
- ☐ Adapted pen/pencil
- ☐ Writing templates
- ☐ Prewritten words/phrases
- ☐ Label maker
- ☐ Portable word processor
- ☐ Computer with accessibility features
- ☐ Computer with word processing software
- ☐ Alternative keyboards
- ☐ Computer with scanner
- ☐ Computer with word prediction
- ☐ Computer with voice recognition software

COMPOSITION OF WRITTEN MATERIAL

- ☐ Picture Supports to write from/about
- ☐ Pictures with words
- ☐ Words Cards/Word Banks/Word Wall
- ☐ Pocket Dictionary/Thesaurus
- ☐ Written templates and Guides
- ☐ Portable, talking spellcheckers/dictionary/thesaurus
- ☐ Word processing software
- ☐ Word prediction software
- ☐ Digital templates
- ☐ Abbreviation expansion
- ☐ Word processing with digital supports
- ☐ Talking word processing
- ☐ Multimedia software with alternative expression of ideas
- ☐ Tools for citations and formats
- ☐ Voice recognition software

READING

- ☐ Standard Txt
- ☐ Book adapted for access
- ☐ Low-tech modifications to text
- ☐ Handheld device to read individual words
- ☐ Use of pictures/symbols with text
- ☐ Electronic text
- ☐ Modified electronic text
- ☐ Text reader
- ☐ Scanner with OCR and text reader
- ☐ Text reader with study skill support

MATHEMATICS

- ☐ Math manipulatives
- ☐ Low-tech physical access
- ☐ Abacus/mathline
- ☐ Adapted math paper
- ☐ Adapted math tools
- ☐ Math "smart chart". math scripts
- ☐ Math tool bars
- ☐ On-screen calculator
- ☐ Alternative keyboards/portable math processors
- ☐ Virtual manipulatives
- ☐ Math software and web simulations
- ☐ Voice recognition math software

ORGANIZATION

Self-Management

- ☐ Sensory regulation tools
- ☐ Movement and deep pressure tools
- ☐ Fidgets
- ☐ Auditory
- ☐ Visuals

(Organization continued in next page)

ORGANIZATION *(continued)*

Information Management

- ☐ Tabs
- ☐ Sticky notes, index cards
- ☐ Highlighters
- ☐ Key words
- ☐ Study guide
- ☐ Task analysis
- ☐ Digital highlighters and sticky notes
- ☐ Handheld scanners/electronic extraction
- ☐ Electronic organization
- ☐ Study grid generators/grading rubric
- ☐ Online search tools
- ☐ Online web trackers
- ☐ Online sorting file tools
- ☐ Digital graphic organizers
- ☐ Online manipulatives, interactive, tutorials, animations

Time Management

- ☐ Checklists
- ☐ Paper planners/calendars
- ☐ Schedules (visual)
- ☐ Portable, adapted timekeepers
- ☐ Electronic reminders
- ☐ Digital planners (PDA) cell phones
- ☐ Web-based planning tools

Material Management

- ☐ Low-tech organizers
- ☐ Checklists
- ☐ Container system
- ☐ Coding system
- ☐ Electronic filing and storage
- ☐ Portable electronic storage
- ☐ Computer-based tools

RECREATION AND LEISURE

- ☐ Typical toys/puzzles/balls/utensils/instruments adapted; adjustable equipment; flexible rules; add visual/auditory clarity
- ☐ Specially designed utensils/equipment
- ☐ Electronically/mechanically adapted utensils and equipment
- ☐ Electronic aids – remote controls, timers, CD players, speech generating devices
- ☐ Computer-facilitated and computer-based activities
- ☐ Online and virtual recreational experiences

VISION

Computer access

- ☐ Color scheme
- ☐ Large operating system features
- ☐ Built-in magnification
- ☐ Fully-featured magnification
- ☐ Magnification with screen reader
- ☐ Screen reader
- ☐ Screen Reader with Braille device

VISION *(continued)*

Reading

- ☐ Glasses
- ☐ Color Filter
- ☐ Slantboard
- ☐ Large print
- ☐ Optical Magnifier
- ☐ Electronic Magnifier
- ☐ CCTV
- ☐ Monocular
- ☐ CCTV with distance camera
- ☐ Audio text
- ☐ Computer-based reading software
- ☐ Electronic Braille notetaker

Mathematics

- ☐ Large print measuring tools
- ☐ Large key calculator
- ☐ Tactile measuring devices
- ☐ Abacus
- ☐ Talking calculator
- ☐ Models or 2D and 3D geometric shapes
- ☐ Tiger embossed, PIAF Tactile representation

Pictorial Information

- ☐ Enlarged format
- ☐ CCTV
- ☐ Models or objects
- ☐ Tactile graphics
- ☐ Tactile-audio graphics

Note taking

- ☐ Slate and stylus
- ☐ Tape or digital recording device
- ☐ Computer-based recording software
- ☐ Electronic Braille note taker

HEARING

Hearing Technology

- ☐ FM
- ☐ Infrared
- ☐ Induction Loop
- ☐ 1:1 Communicators
- ☐ Personal amplification

Alerting

- ☐ Visual or vibrating alerting devices

Communication

- ☐ Telecommunication supports
- ☐ Closed captioning
- ☐ Person to person
- ☐ Classroom/group activities
- ☐ Voice to text/sign
- ☐ Real-time captioning

Writing

- ☐ High contrast pen
- ☐ Portable word processing device
- ☐ Typing with audio support
- ☐ Braillewriter
- ☐ Typing with Braille support
- ☐ Electronic Braille note taker
- ☐ Voice recognition

Mobility

- ☐ Cane
- ☐ Monocular
- ☐ Braille/talking compass
- ☐ Electronic travel device
- ☐ GPS device

Additional Tools for the Team as They Select Appropriate Assistive Technology

Closing the Gap Resource Directory and Online Searchable Database

Once the common vendors are known, the next useful tool is the *Closing the Gap Resource Directory*. The Resource Directory is published each spring as the February/March issue of the Closing the Gap newsletter. It is an excellent tool for school teams. The first step in using the Directory is to go to the Producers Section, which is near the back of the directory. In the Producers Section, team members can look at each of the vendors obtained from the Product Description Section of Resource Directory.

In our example, Don Johnston Incorporated was one of the common vendors listed for talking word processors. Looking up Don Johnston Incorporated reveals a long list of products. Scanning that list reveals *Write:OutLoud®*, which sounds like it might be a talking word processing. Turning to the Software section of the Resource Directory provides a description of this talking word processing software, including price, type of computer it runs on, system requirements, and other valuable information.

Closing the Gap also has a searchable database on its website http://www.closingthegap.com/solutions/products/advanced_search.lasso. Annual subscriptions are required to use the online version but there is a free 14-day trial. The same type of information is included there; once the name of a product or the type of product is known, more information can be obtained from the website.

QIAT Listserv

Quality Indicators of Assistive Technology (QIAT) is a voluntary organization of AT professionals from around the world who share both ideas and questions. This group is a wonderful resource when looking at the needs of students with AT needs. They provide a collegial support network of some of the finest minds and pioneers in the field of assistive technology. Post questions to this listserv, or share ideas and resources. The site is hosted on the University of Kentucky website. Dr. Joy Zabala is the creator and moderator of the site. http://natri.uky.edu/assoc_projects/qiat/

AAC TechConnect

AAC TechConnect has created Device Assistant, a resource designed to provide information on nearly 100 AAC devices currently on the market from major manufacturers. (Information is provided in cooperation with all of the manufacturers.) You can use a feature-match tool to search for a device, and also do side-by-side comparisons. A subscription fee is required, but there is a 14-day free trial. The site was created by Debby McBride, MS, CCC-SLP.

<http://www.aactechconnect.com/da.cfm>